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ABSTRACT

This paper reports results of a follow-up, second-year survey conducted in an effort to gain a greater understanding of the perceptions and level of acceptance of informed educators regarding the Louisiana Teaching Internship Program (LTIP) and the Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program (LTEP) prior to statewide implementation. These are new and innovative programs related to teacher assessment for renewable teaching certification. Assessments are completed using an instrument called the System for Teaching and Learning Assessment and Review (STAR) which is classroom-based and focuses on the teacher, the students, and students' learning during the observation and assesment process. A total of 920 (76.7 percent) useable questionnaires were available for review and analysis. Results overall appear to determine that educators endorse the notion of assessing on-the-job teaching performance for both the purpose of providing support and staff development to the beginning teacher and a means of granting and renewing statewide teaching certification. However, when compared to results of an initial survey, support does not seem to be quite so strong for the LTEP. It seems that there is greater concern and resistance to the notion of renewable certification for experienced teachers, especially among those who currently hold a lifetime certificate. (LL)

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Replacing Lifetime Certification with a Renewable Credential:

A Survey of Louisiana Educators' Perceptions of the Louisiana Teaching Internship and Statewide Teacher Evaluation Programs

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Replacing Lifetime Certification with a Renewable Credential:

A Survey of Louisiana Educators' Perceptions of the Louisiana Teaching Internship and Statewide Teacher Evaluation Programs

Introduction

Educational reform is not a new term heard in America's schools. A review of the education literature over the past twenty years is replete with reports of a public call for educational improvements. In more recent times, a resounding public outcry for significant educational reforms in our nation's schools and classrooms has been heard on the local, state, regional and national scenes. While such efforts have focused on improving school and classroom environments, increasing student achievement, enhancing specific student characteristics (e.g., student motivation, cooperative learning strategies and developing thinking skills), considerable attention has also been focused on professional accountability and evaluation, particularly as it applies to teachers (Chauvin, Ellett, Loup & Slan, 1990).

Within the last decade or so there has been a proliferation of teacher evaluation initiatives in response to legislation from a number of states targeting more stringent teacher certification requirements and processes. In 1980, the state of Georgia implemented the first systematic statewide effort to evaluate the on-the-job performance of teachers through the application of the Teacher Performance Assessment Instruments (TPAI) (Capie, Anderson, Johnson & Ellett, 1980) to the initial, professional certification of all beginning teachers through the use of a classroom-based, large-scale teacher evaluation system. Since the advent of the TPAI, a variety of southern states (e.g., Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Mississippi and Connecticut) have developed similar assessment systems. In addition, other states have extended performance evaluation of teachers to other decision-making contexts such as career ladders (e.g., Texas, Tennessee and Utah), merit pay (Florida's defunct program), and most recently, the professional, renewable certification of all teachers (e.g., Louisiana). Thus, it seems that such renewed efforts have been viewed by many as the "bottom line" when it comes to improving American education (Chauvin, 1990; Chauvin, Ellett, Loup & Slan, 1990; Ellett, 1990).

Teacher evaluation, particularly as it applies to licensure/certification, continues to be a popular, national concern, as evidenced by the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), a call by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for a new generation of assessments for the National Teacher Examinations (Educational Testing Services, 1990) and by conceptions about and research on effective teaching that has potential implications for the future of teacher evaluation practices (Berliner, 1986; Shulman, 1986). Particularly in recent years, moving beyond paper and pencil tests to actual assessments of on-the-job performance appears of critical interest and importance in the areas of teacher assessment and teacher certification.

Louisiana has joined this national movement focusing on teacher assessment and credentialing. In response to recent demands for increased accountability and reform in education, and with the passage of state legislation in 1988, Louisiana is the first state to initiate a program to assess *all* teachers on-the-job for the purpose of renewable, professional certification. Given this current national interest in teacher assessment and credentialing and the focus on such processes as a means to improve the quality of schooling in America, it seems important to investigate and assess initial influences and resulting effects that occur when such large-scale efforts are initiated. Successful implementation of such programs hinges not only on comprehensive research and development, and effective technical execution of processes and procedures, but also on understanding perceptions held by those individuals affected and achieving reasonable level of acceptance among professionals.

Large-scale teacher assessment programs, implemented as part of statewide educational reform initiatives, have already influenced individual and organizational functioning within schools in those states where such programs have been implemented (Burry, et. al., 1989; Ginsberg & Berry, 1990; Timar, 1989). Such efforts have resulted in both positive and negative outcomes. For example, Ginsberg and Berry (1990) report mixed results in South Carolina's massive educational reform efforts. While improvements have been noted in student achievement, increased student services for special populations and enhanced teacher salaries, teachers are reportedly

"devastated by ....[in addition to other reform requirements]....paperwork and evaluation" (Ginsberg & Berry, 1990, p.552). In addition, they report that 27.2% of the 4000 teachers surveyed are planning to leave teaching prior to retirement. While South Carolina's massive reform efforts included more than enhanced teacher evaluation processes (e.g, curriculum reform, student achievement testing, etc.), such negative feelings communicated by South Carolina teachers seem to point to the need to understand professionals' (i.e., teachers, administrators, etc.) perceptions regarding newly mandated programs and strive to build positive acceptance among individuals who are affected.

In Louisiana, passage of state legislation mandating statewide teacher assessment for the purpose of renewable, professional certification of all teachers in effect, ended lifetime certification for teachers, which was viewed by many as a property right and long-held sacred norm. During the first two years of the LTIP/LTEP research, development and piloting, and as the approaching implementation target dates got closer, educators were observed to express a full range of responses: for eager anticipation and enthusiasm, to concern and anxiety, to threat, fear and total resistance, or total denial (Chauvin, 1989); Personal observations, 1989-90; Tobin, et. al., 1990). Particularly in situations where changes test long-held sacred norms (e.g., lifetime certification) and introduce new processes such as on-the-job performance assessment, mandatory support and professional development, and peer assessment for all teachers, it seems important to assess and address perceptions, beliefs and acceptance of those individuals involved. Thus, the success of any large-scale education reform effort (e.g., statewide teacher assessment for renewable certification) would seem to hinge on a careful appraisal of the human/personnel response and involvement, so that human, technical and financial resources may be maximized to achieve desired outcomes.

Purpose

Given the concern regarding professional acceptance of, and involvement in, large-scale teacher certification programs, statewide efforts in Louisiana to implement a statewide on-the-job performance assessment system for the purpose of renewable, professional certification of all teachers (including those who previously held lifetime certificates) offer an unique opportunity to

investigate perceptions and feelings of educators who are affected. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to report results of a follow-up, second-year survey conducted in an effort to gain a greater understanding of the perceptions and level of acceptance of informed educators regarding the Louisiana Teaching Internship Program (LTIP) and the Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program (LTEP) prior to statewide implementation. Results are also reported regarding perceptions regarding the potential for on-the-job assessment for initial and renewable principal certification. Finally, an effort was made to obtain information regading the effectiveness of the pilot program for certifying assessors in the LTIP and LTEP.

Louisiana Teaching Internship Program (LTIP) and
Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program (LTEP)

The Louisiana Teaching Internship Law (1984) and The Children First Act (1988) provide for the development of assessment programs for all begining teachers (1 to 2 years experience) and all experienced teachers (3 or more years experience) in Louisiana. Since beginning in FY 1988-1989, initial research and development efforts have been underway to develop comprehensive assessment systems and accompanying assessor certification programs to satisfy legislative mandates that establish a support and professional development program for beginning teachers (LTIP), and a statewide evaluation program targeting professional development and renewable certification of all 45,000 experienced teachers (LTEP).

A major focus of these programs is on the observation and assessment of the *quality of teaching and learning in the classroom learning environment.* That is, based upon observation data obtained, inferences are made about student learning and the qulaity of teacher and student interactions, in addition to the effectiveness of teacher behaviors. Principals, master teachers and other educators who have been educated and certified in the use of the assessment programs may serve as members of a three-person assessment team, and resource persons in assisting teachers in their continued professional development.

Assessments are completed using a comprehensive, classroom-based and student-focused assessment system called the STAR (System for Teaching and learning Assessment and Review) (Ellett, Loup & Chauvin, 1990). The STAR focuses not only on the teacher, but on studetns and

their learning, during the observation and assessment process. Learning from research and development efforts of the past ten years in other states, the initial assessment framework for the STAR resulted from a content synthesis of key elements/descriptions of teaching and learning of eight other state systems (Ellett, Garland & Logan, 1987; Logan, Garland & Ellett, 1989). This initial framework was expanded and enhanced to include important elements such as a strong focus on student learning and assessment of the total classroom learning environment, as well as key areas such as thinking skills, comprehensive planning and purposeful monitoring and providing feedback related to student learning. In keeping with the research on teaching and learning, and with the input of Louisiana educators, the STAR has been developed to reflect essential elements of effective teaching and learning that are applicable to the full range of teaching and learning contexts, and allow for a variety of teaching styles. A draft of the STAR was developed and initially piloted in FY 1988-1989. Also, 289 Louisiana educators completed an eight-day pilot program designed to prepare and certify educators in the LTIP/LTEP pilot as STAR assessors. Participants in this pilot program included principals, assistant principals, master teachers (i.e., teachers with a master's degree and five (5) years successful teaching experience), instructional supervisors, college faculty and other educators (e.g., Louisiana Department of Education personnel). Reliability and validity studies were conducted and were used in planning an extended pilot year for FY 1989-1990.

During FY 1989-1990, research and development activities continued in the refinement of the STAR and LTIP/LTEP processes. An extended pilot was conducted during FY 1989-1990 and included preparation and certification of approximately 4000 Louisiana educations (Louisiana principals, assistant principals, master teachers, instructional supervisors, college faculty and other educators).

During the two-year pilot, Louisiana educators (particularly teachers) have been significantly involved in the development of these programs and have provided strong professional endorsement of the system used, the STAR. In fact, teacher input in the development of the STAR is required by law. Detailed descriptions and discussions of the LTIP and LTEP research and

development activities and the STAR, its conceptual basis and assessment issues relative to its use can be found in Chauvin (1989), Chauvin, Ellett & Loup (1990), Ellett (1990), Ellett, Chauvin, Loup & Naik (1990), Logan, Ellett & Naik (1990), Loup, Ellett & Chauvin (1990) and Teddlie, Ellett & Naik (1990).

Implementation of the LTIP was targeted for the 1990-1991 school year with all beginning teachers, while LTEP was scheduled to be implemented statewide in 1990-1991 with one-third of all experienced teachers. As of July 1, 1990, the Louisiana Department of Education has assumed full responsibility for the implementation of these two programs (LTIP and LTEP), as well as preparing and certifying STAR assessors. The College of Education at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, has continued in a research and development role, with a stronger focus now on the professional and staff development components to compliment these assessment programs.

In October, 1990, the LTIP was implemented as scheduled, but not all beginning teachers were included. Because of logistical problems, it became necessary to exempt some beginning teachers in instances were a complete assessment team could not be constituted. The LTEP was implemented statewide, beginning in October, 1990, with slightly less than one-fifth of all experienced teachers, selected at random by the Louisiana Department of Education.

Methodology

During the 1988-1989 pilot year, 289 educators who completed an eight-day pilot program designed to prepare and certify educators in the LTIP/LTEP pilot as STAR assessors were surveyed. In May, 1989, a questionnaire was mailed to each of these individuals. Of these questionnaires mailed, 198 useable instruments were obtained, representing a return rate of 69% (Chauvin & Ellett, 1990).

As Louisiana educators (master teachers, principals, assistant principals, instructional supervisors, Department of Education personnel, college faculty and other educators) completed a pilot certification program for assessors and had acquired a comprehensive understanding of the assessment system and preparation program, responses were solictied through the use of a survey instrument. Results of the initial investigation, conducted in the spring, 1989, were used to design

a similar, follow-up investigation which was conducted in the spring, 1990, with educators who had participated in the 1989-1990 extended pilot year. The questionnaire and survey packet (See Appendix A) used in this study represents a revision and enhancement of instrument used in the initial study (Chauvin & Ellett, 1990). Revisions were made in the original questionnaire to more accurately reflect concerns and issues related to legislation, policy, procedures and program implementation which had been identified as a result of continuing research and development activities since August, 1988. Educators who had succesfully completed the LTIP/LTEP STAR assessor certification program were randomly selected for participation in this follow-up survey. Descriptive summaries of survey data and qualitative analysis of comments were completed to identify patterns, perceptions and common themes regarding the LTIP and LTEP evident among Louisiana educators just prior to statewide implementation.

Sample

During the 1989-1990 extended pilot year, the principal and one master teacher from each public school in Louisiana was scheduled to participate and complete a seven-day pilot program designed to prepare and certify STAR assessors for the LTIP and LTEP. In addition, 50% of all assistant principals and 50% of all instructional supervisors in Louisiana public schools/districts were included in pilot assessor certification programs. Approximately 100 college faculty members and other educators were scheduled to attend and complete a STAR assessor certification program. A total of approximately 4000 educators, representing every public school district and special school district, were scheduled to participate in the extended pilot version of the LTIP and LTEP.

In March, 1990, 1200 Louisiana educators (i.e., master teachers, principals, assistant principals, instructional supervisors, college faculty and other educators) who had, at that point, successfully completed all requirements of the LTIP/LTEP pilot program to certify STAR assessors were randomly selected. The random sample selected included educators from every public school district and special school district in Louisiana.

In April, 1990, a questionnaire packet was mailed to each person randomly selected. Of the 1200 questionnaires mailed, 920 useable instruments were obtained, resulting in a return rate of

76.7%. While above average, this return rate may be somewhat suppressed for two reasons: (1) the survey was conducted just prior to spring break in some school districts (not all school districts schedule the spring break during the same week) and, (2) survey dates also occurred prior to the legislative session which begins in mid-April and state funding for teacher salaries increases had not yet been ensured.

As shown in Table 1 (Tables are provided in the Appendix), 39.3% of the respondents were male, and 60.7% were female. Ethnic composition of the respondent group was 23.7% Black, 75.9% White, 0.1% Hispanic, and 0.2% of other ethnic background. Of the participants responding, 45.5% were classroom "master" teachers, 33.3% were principals, 11.6% were assistant principals, 5.4% were central office (instructional) supervisors, 2.3% were college faculty and 1.9% were other education professionals (e.g., Department of Education staff).

Also reflected in Table 1, the percentage of education levels represented include 0.2% Bachelors degree, 26.8% Master's degree, 60.9% Master's degree plus 30 graduate hours, 8.0% Specialist degree and 4.0% Doctorate. With the exception of only two school districts, respondents represented every public school district in Louisiana. The number of respondents from each school district represented appeared to be generally proportional to the size of the district and representative of educators across Louisiana. Individuals responding to the questionnaire ranged in years of experience from one (1) to more than twenty (20), with 95.8% of all respondents having more than ten (10) years experience in public/private schools.

Additional demographic data were collected and is included in Table 1. Of particular note, regarding the sample of respondents, questions 10-16 were included to better assess respondents self-perception of their understandings regarding the LTIP and LTEP and use of the STAR in these programs. With regard to LTIP, 81.8% of the respondents felt prepare/completely prepared to explain elements and requirements of the LTIP, and 80.5% of them felt prepared/completed prepared to explain elements and requirements of the LTEP. 70.4% of the all respondents felt prepared/completely prepared to complete assessments with the STAR in the initial implementation of the LTIP and LTEP in the fall of 1990.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this survey represented a revised version of the instrument used in an initial investigation conducted in the spring, 1989. In addition to comments and responses of participants in the pilot LTIP/LTEP STAR assessor certification programs provided through daily evaluation/comments forms, a review and analysis of the Louisiana Teaching Internship Law (1984) and the sections of the Children First Act (1988) pertaining to the Teacher Evaluation Program, provided a basis for the development of the original instrument, as well as revisions in the one used in this investigation. Issues and concerns raised by program participants relatd to policy, procedure and program implementation throughout the 1988-1989 and 1989-1990 pilot years were used to generate relevant items for the questionnaire. Likewise, ambiguous, contradictory and/or problematic provisions of the legislations were included as survey items.

Demographic data were collected using 21 items. The questionnaire included an additional 106 items pertaining to multiple aspects of the program, for a total of 127 items. Items were divided by several categories: (1) LTIP - 34 items, (2) LTEP - 46 items, (3) the STAR assessor certification program - 17 items, (3) related assessement concerns - 3 items, and (4) the STAR instrument - 6 items. Within each section, items were further group by related issues and concerns. Table 2 provides the subcategories and number of items in each subcategory for the LTIP and LTEP sections of the questionnaire.

Participants were asked to respond to each item in the questionnaire using a four-point Likert-type scale. Response types were: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Participants were asked to chose the one, best response for each item. In addition to responses obtained using a Likert-type scale, space was provided for additional comments to each aspect of the programs. A final section was provided for survey participants to note any general concerns and opinions regarding implementation of the LTIP and LTEP, as well as use of the STAR in these programs.

Data Collection Procedures

In April, 1990, a survey packet, containing a cover letter explaining the study and purpose of the investigation (included in Appendix A), a copy of the questionnaire and a self-addressed return envelope, was set to each person randomly selected from those educators who had, at this point, satisfactorily completed all requirements in the LTIP/LTEP STAR assessor certification program. A total of 1200 survey packets were mailed to randomly selected educators. Participants were asked to complete the survey instrument and return it in the envelope provided by April 17, 1990. A total of 920 useable questionnaires were received, yielding a response rate of 76.7%.

Data Analysis

Data collected through the questionniares were compiled and descriptive statistics calculated. Percentages were calculated for each survey item by scale category. In addition to percentages for the total respondent group, percentages were calculated for: (a) teachers, (b) principals and assistant principals, (c) central office (instructional) supervisors, (4) college faculty members and other education professionals.

Survey responses were analyzed by particular respondent types in an effort to gain a greater understanding of the perceptions held by professionals accourding rto their anticipated positions in the composition of assessment teams for implementation. Teacher responses were analyzed as a separate group, as these persons would fulfill the "master teacher" position on the assessment teams established by local districts for implementation of the LTIP or "peer teacher" for the LTEP; or they could be the teacher being assessed by an assessment team in the LTEP. Responses of principals and assistant principals were analysed as a second group because these persons would fulfil the "principal" responsibilities on the assessment team. Central office (instructional) supervisors wre analyzed a a third group, since these individuals could conceivably serve in a "principal" role, or perhaps even assume that of an "outside assessor" if policy and procedures are changed to reflect this option. Finally, college faculty and other education professionals were analyzed as a separate group, anticipating that these persons would fill the role of an "outside assessor" and are truly professionals external to the organizational and social parameters of a local school district. It is also possible that these individuals might have a different perspective of the

LTIP and LTEP programs, than the other groups of educators.

Finally, a careful analysis of comments and open-ended responses was conducted to identify patterns, beliefs and common themes among educators across Louisiana regarding these programs, the STAR and quickly-approaching implementation targets.

Results

A total of 920 useable questionnaires were available for review and analysis. Data collected were compiled and descriptive statistics were calculated for the total respondent group, as well as by position categories. Tables 3 through 7 provide specific response percentages for each survey item by scale category. Table 3 provides percentages for the total respondent group, while tables 4 through 7 provide percentages for: (a) teachers, (b) principals and assistant principals, (c) central office (instructional) supervisors, and (d) college faculty and other education professionals, respectively. Results for each group are provided in the order outlined above.

Total Respondents

As shown in Table 3, general agreement by respondents regarding provisions for implementation of the LTIP and LTEP. For example, in response to whether or not the LTIP should be implemented for all beginning teachers in Louisiana , 89.5% agree/strongly agree. Regarding assesment team composition, respondents seem to endorse the three-person composition concept (principal, master teacher, college faculty). However, respondents strongly support the "right of refusal" for both assigning a master teacher to a LTIP assessment team, as well as a beginning teacher's right to request an alternate master teacher (provided there is justified, valid reason). Respondents agree/strongly agree with these two policy suggestions: 94.9% agree/strongly agree and 90.8% agree/strongly agree, respectively. Also, there seems to be general appreciation for logistical considerations such as time and personnel shortages. Respondents support expanding the definition of "college faculty member" to include other certified assessors (73.4% agree/strongly agree), and a substitute administrator for the school principal, when there is a need (80.6% agree/strongly agree). Other areas of strong endorsement relate to the establishment of a predetermined and objective State standard for satisfactory completion of the internship program

(92.5% agree/strongly agree) and the benefit of a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) for the beginning teacher (89.7 agree/strongly agree).

Reviewing response patterns as shown in Table 3, several interesting issues surface. While the legislation mandates three (3) observations by each member of the assessment team during the first ninety (90) days of employment, respondents were not in agreement with the provision: 73.3 disagree/strongly disagree versus 26.8 agree/strongly agree. However, there was observed support for the assessment team to determine the number of observations necessary for the intern teacher: 84.2% agree/strongly agree. Joint conferences were more strongly supported (73.2% agree/strongly agree) than individual conferences between each assessor and the beginning teacher (32.8 agree/strongly agree). While conferences were viewed as a professional obligation (91.5% agree/strongly agree), respondents indicated that these should either be conducted during school hours with release time provided (86.8% agree/strongly agree), or outside of regular school hours, with additional compensation (74.4%). Also, 79.4% of the respondents indicated that master teachers should receive additional compensation for serving as a member of an assessment team. An overwhelming 95.9% of the respondents agree/strongly agree that the inclusion of assessment data collected by the master teacher is important for planning for professional development.

Similar response patterns were observed for the total respondent group relative to the LTEP. However, weaker support for implementation of the LTEP for renewable, professional certification for <u>all</u> experienced teachers was observed than was for the LTIP (67.2% agree/strongly agree). 79.6% of all respondents agree/strongly agree that the peer teacher should be included on the assessment team, as they feel that it contributes to the professionalization of teaching (81.1% agree/strongly agree). Respondents also support qualifications of the peer teacher that include holding a master's degree and having five or more years of successful teaching experience (93.1% agree/strongly agree). While it seems that the preference is for the peer teacher to be certified in the same subject and/or grade level as the teacher being assessed (85.5% agree/strongly agree), respondents indicate that he/she should be selected from a <u>different</u> school than where the assessee is assigned (75.1% agree/strongly agree). As with the LTIP, respondents support a "right of

refusal" option for both the peer teacher assigned to an assessment team (95.2% agree/strongly agree), as well as the assessee's right to request an alternate peer teacher (92.8% agree/strongly agree). Also, 79.0% of the respondents support the idea of providing additional compensation to the peer teacher for serving on an assessment team. While the Children First Act mandates that teachers who successfully complete the LTIP must enter the LTEP immediately the following school year, respondents do not seem to endorse this provision (68.8% disagree/strongly disagree). However, there is stronger support for requiring experienced, out-of-state teachers to complete the LTEP upon initial entry into Louisiana (77.0% agree/strongly agree). Respondents did not support an assessment cycle occurring more frequently than once every five years for the LTEP (83.2% disagree/strongly disagree).

As with the LTIP, respondents support the inclusion of the Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) in the assessment process for the LTEP (75.1% agree/strongly agree), but only in the fall semester if acceptable performance in this area is observed (86.8% agree/strongly agree).

For the LTEP, slightly different perceptions are held regarding the professional development conferences held after assessments are complete. While the conference is viewed as a professional obligation (92.0% agree/strongly agree), only 64.0% of the respondents agree/strongly agree that all assessment team members should be present. In fact, 56.5% indicate that the outside assessor should always be present, but the assessee should always have the option of requesting to meet only with the principal (62.6% agree/strongly agree). Strong support for inclusion of assessment data collected by the peer teacher is present (93.2% agree/strongly agree), as is the development of a professional development plan based upon the assessment data for every teacher (81.9% agree/strongly agree).

As with the LTIP, respondents prefer conferences to be held during regular school hours with release time provided (86.9% agree/strongly agree), with additional compensation provided when they are held before/after regular school hours (78.7% agree/strongly agree). Related to this, respondents support a policy which would provide each member of the assessment team with a copy of the teacher's assessment profile results (68.3% agree/strongly agree). Only 44.4%

agree/strongly agree that the teacher should give prior permission for release of assessment results to his/her assessment team members.

For teachers requiring assistance in areas assessed as being below acceptable standards, the professional development plan appears to be an important area supported by respondents. 83.9% of the respondents agree/strongly agree that such a plan should be approved by all assessment team members, include both self- and principal-directed activities (95.1% agree/strongly agree) and developed immediately upon identifying areas of need (82.5% agree/strongly agree). The two-year reentry provision of the Children First Act is similarly endorsed by respondents (93.2% agree/strongly agree).

As with any professional program, credibility of the process is influenced by the perceived rigor and quality of preparation received by individuals charged with the responsibility of implementation. Thus, it seemed important to also assess educators perception of the quality and integrity of the STAR assessor certification program. Without exception, respondents overwhelmingly endorsed the design of the assessor certification program, as well as its professional value and relevance to school-based professional development. Over 90% agreement was noted in respondents support of various elements of the STAR assessor certification program. Specifically, 94.8% of the respondents report that completion of the program had already enhanced their professional abilities as an instructional leader/master teacher to enhance students' learning. However, a smaller percentage of respondents considered it to be a "meaningful and worthwhile professional growth activity" (62.9% agree/strongly agree). Thus, professional development focused on enhancing students' learning in the classroom seems to have already begun, prior to statewide implementation of these two programs (LTIP and LTEP).

Standard, multiple proficiency checkpoints were similarly endorsed in the STAR assessor certification program (94.3% agree/strongly agree). Endorsement of each individual proficiency requirement ranged from 82.7% to 98.8% agree/strongly agree. In fact, as shown in Table 3, item 81, 96.4% of the respondents indicate that they are "proud" to have successfully completed the STAR assessor certification program. Likewise, there seems to be support for inclusion of an

update session (81.2% agree/strongly agree).

Upon completion of the STAR assessor program and after a small number of "practice assessments" (approximately 2-4), 74.1% of the respondents consider the STAR to provide a "fair and impartial" assessment of on-the-job teaching performance. 59.7% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is "clearly written/easily understood" and 60.1% agree/strongly agree that the process "takes a reasonable amount of time". Respondents report an average of 87 minutes to organize notes and complete assessement decisions once the observation has been conducted. A range of 10 to 360 minutes for completing one such assessment is reported for the total group of respondents. It seems that respondents would welcome increased opportunities to conduct field-supervised observations within the parameters of the STAR assessor certification program (81.4% agree/strongly agree). Presently one field proficiency is included in the assessor certification program model, with a minimum of two independent field practice assessments to be completed after satisfactory completion of all other certification requirements. However, it seems by this response that perhaps individuals would feel more confident in the use of STAR with more opportunities to observe in a "live classroom" with support during the program model. This may partially explain the expressed desire of respondents to extend the current STAR assessor certification model to "more than seven days" (62.9% agree/strongly agree). Another explanation may lie in the "newness" of the STAR, observation procedures and assessment processes mandated by legislation underwriting the LTIP and LTEP.

Of importance, it seems clear that the great majority of respondents endorse inclusion of all assessment indicators in the STAR, as they are considered to be important for enhancing student learning. Of greatest concern seems to be the value of estimating the quantity and quality of student engagement evident during a lesson. While respondents noted that this information is valuable, they also report difficulty in being able to attend to this element while at the same time recording dialogue and actions of the teacher and students.

Related to the LTIP and LTEP, respondents seem to endorse a similar process more strongly for the initial certification of principals (76.4% agree/strongly agree), than for the

renewable certification of principals (66.8% agree/strongly agree). Likewise, there seems to be support for the development or adaptation of local accountability programs that is consistent with the STAR and accompanying assessment process (81.4% agree/strongly agree).

Master Teachers

In an effort to detect any substantial differences in perceptions held by professionals regarding the LTIP and LTEP, analysis of responses by position type was also conducted. In general, the responses appear to be generally consistent with those obtained from all respondents. In some instances, support or agreement was observed to be slightly higher or lower than the total respondent group. For example, 90.3% of the respondents agree/strongly agree that the LTIP should be implemented for all beginning teachers in Louisiana, as compared to 89.5% for the total respondent group. Given the three-person assessment team model (principal, master teacher, college faculty member), teachers strongly favored a "right of refusal" option for the master teacher (96.0% agree/strongly agree). A similar response was provided for the assessee's right to request an alternate master teacher, but this represented slightly less support (93.0% agree/strongly agree). Of interest, is the stronger position indicated by master teachers regarding provision of additional compensation for serving on an assessment team than for the total respondent group.(88.3% as compared to 79.4%). Teachers responses were similar to the total respondent group in supporting a "predetermined and object State standard" (93.0% agree/strongly agree) and comprehensive planning requirement (i.e., CUP) (90.0% agree/strongly agree) for LTIP. Teachers also seemed to appreciate of logistical considerations such as time and personnel shortages, and supported options that allowed substitute team members for college faculty and/or the school principal when deemed necessary.

Response patterns for participating master teachers were similar to the total respondent group regarding LTIP requirements related to the number of observations, initiation of observations and attendance of assessment team members at post-assessment conferences. While master teachers seem to endorse participation in the post-assessment conference as a professional obligation (90.15 agree/strongly agree), 84.5% indicated that additional compensation should be provided when

conducted outside of regular school hours. In fact, 88.4% indicated that these conferences should be held during regular school hours, with release time provided. Also, teachers were more in favor of conferences being held jointly rather than individually (73.0% agree/strongly agree). Overall, 97% of the master teachers agree/strongly agree that assessment data collected by the master teacher is an important element of planning a teacher's professional growth.

An area where teachers' responses differed from the total group was related to the development of a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP). Only 28.6% of the teachers endorsed the development of a CUP in both the fall and spring semesters, whereas 37.4% of the total respondent group agree/strongly agree. However, 81.1% of the teachers agree/strongly agree that if the intern teacher demonstrated acceptable performance on the CUP in the fall semester, a second CUP should not be required in the Spring semester.

In response to the LTEP, 64.3% of the teachers agree/strongly agree that the program should be implemented for granting renewable professional certification for all experienced teachers. 96.3% of the teachers agree/strongly agree with the application of the the master teacher definition to "peer teacher". 68.1% of the master teachers were in favor of the principal and outside assessor reaching agreement on the selection of the peer teacher. In other areas related to the assessment team composition, master teacher response patterns seemed to be in general agreement with those observed for the total respondent group, with percentages by scale category very similar.

While not substantially different from the total group, one interesting pattern for master teachers was noted with regard to mandated participation in the LTEP immediately following successful completion of the LTIP. Teachers appear to more strongly disagree (72.6% disagree/strongly disagree) with this requirement set forth in the Children First Act than as indicated by the total group (68.8% disagree/strongly disagree). However, requiring out-of-state experienced teachers to enter the LTEP upon initial entry into Louisiana teaching received slightly less support from teachers (75.3% agree/strongly agree) than from the total group (77.0% agree/strongly agree).

Regarding policy and procedure issues related to implementation, 60.6% of the teachers agree/strongly agree that a copy of the assessment profile results should be provided to each assessment team member. Also, 54.5% of the teachers supported release of the assessment profile to team members only with the teacher's prior permission. Teachers supported that conferences should be held to discuss assessment results and that these conferences should be held during regular school hours with release time provided (89.0% agree/strongly agree). Also, 86.5% of the teachers agree/strongly agree that if conferences are held before/after normal school hours, extra compensation should be provided.

While the post-assessment conference is viewed as professional obligation (90.8% agree/strongly agree), only 65.6% of the teachers agree/strongly agree that all assessment team members should be present. 54.1% indicated that the outside assessor should always attend, but 70.3% agree/strongly agree that the assessee should have the option of requesting to meet only with the principal. Also of interest, is the strong support for inclusion of assessment data collected by the peer teacher (95.4% agree/strongly agree) and the expectation for every teacher to develop an individual professional growth plan based on his/her assessment data (80.8% agree/strongly agree). Procedures pertaining to professional assistance and certification status involving "unsatisfactory" performance were perceived by teachers similar to that reported for the total group.

Responses obtained from master teachers were very similar to the total respondent group regarding the certification program for STAR assessors. In most instances, positive endorsement of the elements and proficiency/certification requirements for STAR assessors received slightly stronger support. Additionally, 96.7% of the master teachers reported that completion of theprogram had already enhanced their professional abilities to enhance students' learning. However, only 70.4% responded agree/strongly agree to the STAR assessor certification program being " a meaningful and worthwhile activity". 98.8% of the master teachers responded agree/strongly agree to required multiple proficiency checkpoints in the assessor certification program. Strong support for required update sessions was also evidenced.

Endorsement of each individual proficiency requirement ranged from 87.2% to 96.6% agree/strongly agree. In fact, in response to item 81, 98.5% of the respondents indicate that they are "proud" to have successfully completed the STAR assessor certification program.

Upon completion of the STAR assessor program and after a small number of "practice assessments" (approximately 2-4), 63.7% of the master teachers consider the STAR to provide a "fair and impartial" assessment of on-the-job teaching performance. 73.5% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is "clearly written/easily understood" and 82.7% agree/strongly agree that the process "takes a reasonable amount of time". Master teachers reported an average of 90 minutes to organize notes and complete assessement decisions once the observation has been conducted, with a range of 15 to 360 minutes. It seems that master teachers support increased opportunities to conduct field-supervised observations within the parameters of the STAR assessor certification program (87.6% agree/strongly agree). They also strongly endorsed extending the program to more than seven days (91.3% agree/strongly agree).

Master teachers appear to endorse a similar program for the initial certification of principals (95.2% agree/strongly agree), as well as for the granting of renewable certification of principals (87.5% agree/strongly agree). 82.4% appear to support development or adaptation of local accountability programs that is consistent with the STAR and accompanying assessment processes.

Principals and Assistant Principals

Data obtained from principals and assistant principals, for the most part, revealed responses that are generally consistent with patterns observed and already discussed for the total respondent group, as well as master teachers, there are a few observations worthy of note. Principals/assistant principals more strongly supported both Fall and Spring assessments: 54.7% agree/strongly agree as compared to 48.2% (total group) and 39.3% (master teachers), as well as the combining of Fall and Spring assessment data for decision making (66.0% agree/strongly agree). Slightly stronger endorsement of a CUP requirement was also evidenced (79.1% agree/strongly agree).

Interestingly, principals/assistant principals indicated that all assessment team members should receive a copy of the teacher's assessment profile (76.3% agree/strongly agree), but 64.2%

indicated that it should not be contingent on the teacher's prior permission. However, while asseessment results should be provided to assessment team members, only 58.1% responded agree/strongly agree to a provision allowing the teacher the option to meet only with the principal.

Similar perceptions of other provisions proposed for conducting the post-assessment conference were observed for principals/assistant principals as were for other respondent groups. However, slightly less support was evidenced for the provision of additional compensation when conferences are held outside of regular school hours (72.7% agree/strongly agree).

While 93.8% reported that completion of the assessor certification program had already enhanced their professional abilitieis as an instructional leader/master teacher to enahnce students' learning, only 58.9% reported that they considered it to be a "meaningful and worthwhile professional growth activity". Yet, 95.3% reported that they were "proud" to have completed completed the program.

Standard, multiple proficiency checkpoints were endorsed by principals/assistant principals (91.4% agree/strongly agree) and endorsement of individual proficiency checkpoints ranged from 50.7% to 93.2%. Endorsement of the knowledge test received the weakest support by this group. 90.5% indicated a need for an update session and 70.0% would like to see the program lengthened to more than seven days. While principals similarly endorsed the inclusion of more opportunities for additional supervised field assessments in live classrooms (76.0% agree/strongly agree), this was somewhat less than that observed in other respondent groups (e.g., total group and master teachers).

While 73.3% of the principals/assistant principals reported that the STAR is "clearly written/easy to understand" and 81.4% reported that it "takes a reasonable amount of time", only 55.6% felt that it provides a "fair and impartial" assessment of on-the-job teaching performance. A range of 10 - 240 minutes was reported by principals as the amount of time needed to complete an assessment after completing the observation, with a mean of 84 minutes. Assistant principals reported a range of 10 - 300 minutes, with a mean of 82 minutes required to complete an assessment.

It is also important to note here that only 48.8% endorsed a policy requiring development or adaptation of local accountability programs that are consistent with with the STAR and accompanying assessment process. Likewise, only 55.5% agree/strongly agree that the STAR was helpful in developing professional improvement plans for teachers.

Interestingly, principals/assistant principals responded positively to the concept of a similar assessment program for initial certification of school principals (91.4% agree/strongly agree); however, they did not appear to be as supportive of a similar process for renewable certification of school principals (63.7% agree/strongly agree).

Central Office/Instructional Supervisors

A review of responses obtained from central office staff offer little differences in response patterns from those observed for other respondent groups. While central office/instructional supervisors seem to agree with provisions regulating the composition of assessment teams, substitutions for team members (e.g., college faculty member or principal), "right of refusal" provisions for master/peer teachers and assessees, established, predetermined and objective standards, and other such provisions already highlighted in previous sections, they generally more strongly evidenced positive endorsement than other groups. Interestingly, instructional supervisors more strongly supported conferences to be held during school hours with release time for both the LTIP and LTEP (LTIP: 93.7% agree/strongly agree; LTEP: 95.9% agree/strongly agree), and a provision for additional compensation when conferences are held outside of regular school hours (LTIP: 66.6%; LTEP: 66.6%). Dissemination of assessment profiles to assessment team members, with or without the teacher's prior permission seemed to be similarly endorsed by instructional supervisors as has already been noted for other respondent groups. It is also interesting to note that only 50.0% of this group endorsed an option allowing the teacher to meet only with the principal in a post-assessment conference.

Another area of observed difference in response patterns relates to the assessment period and component requirements in the assesment process. Instructional supervisors seemed to more

strongly endorse the concept of an assessment year (i.e., Fall and Spring assessments) (53.8% agree/strongly agree) and that assessment data from both assessment be combined for decision making (68.8% agree/strongly agree). Only 62.5% of the instructional supervisors indicated that a teacher should not be required to complete a CUP, if satisfactory performance in this area had been evidenced during the Fall assessment.

Slightly less support for inclusion of assessment data collected by the peer teacher was evidenced by instructional supervisors (87.5% agree/strongly agree), as compared to other respondent groups. However, strong endorsement was evidenced by this group for the development of a professional growth plan based on assessment data for every teacher (87.5% agree/strongly agree). Similar perceptions of the STAR and STAR assessor certification program were evidenced by this group. For example, 78.7% agree/strongly agree that the STAR takes a reasonable amount of time. 63.6% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is a fair and impartial process, and 86.4% agree/strongly agree that it is clearly written and easily understood. 63.6% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is useful in developing professional improvement plans for teachers. A range of 20-200 minutes was reported as time necessary to complete an assessment after completing the observation, with a mean of 87 minutes.

College Faculty and Other Education Professionals

A review of responses obtained from college faculty and other education professionals also offers little differences in response patterns from those observed for other respondent groups. 100% of these educators endorsed the LTIP for all beginning teachers, while 80% endorsed the LTEP for experienced teachers. While college faculty and other educators seem to agree with provisions regulating the composition of assessment teams, substitutions for team members (e.g., college faculty member or principal), "right of refusal" provisions for master/peer teachers and assessees, established, predetermined and objective standards, and other such provisions already highlighted in previous sections, they generally more strongly evidenced positive endorsement than other groups. Dissemination of assessment profiles to assessment team members, with or without the teacher's prior permission seemed to be similarly endorsed by college faculty and other

educators, as has already been noted for other respondent groups. It is also interesting to note that 45.7% of this group endorsed an option allowing the teacher to meet only with the principal in a post-assessment conference.

Similar perceptions of the STAR and STAR assessor certification program were evidenced by this group. For example, 64.7% agree/strongly agree that the STAR takes a reasonable amount of time. 76.5% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is a fair and impartial process, and 67.6% agree/strongly agree that it is clearly written and easily understood. 93.9% agree/strongly agree that the STAR is useful in developing professional improvement plans for teachers. A range of 20-270 minutes was reported as time necessary to complete an assessment after completing the observation, with a mean of 86 minutes.

100% of respondents in this group reported that they were "proud" to have completed the STAR assessor certification program. 97.1% reported positive effects on enhancing professional abilities to enhance students' learning. 93.4% - 100% endorsement of each individual proficiency checkpoint was evidenced, except for the knowledge test (58.6% disagree). However, 100% endorsed multiple proficiency standards. Likewise, 100% endorsed the development of staff development programs, consistent teacher education programs. While strong endorsements were evidenced in these areas, only 40% of these respondents indicated that the STAR assessor certification program was a "meaningful and worthwhile professional growth activity". Of note, these individuals indicated that the STAR assessor certification program should be extended to more than seven days (85.8% agree/strongly agree) and 100% endorsed the inclusion of an update session.

Qualitative Analysis of Respondents' Comments

With a small number of exceptions, most of the 920 questionnaires received contained additional comments written in the spaces provided. Positive endorsement and support of the LTIP, LTEP and the STAR assessment system was evident in these comments, as well as participants' sharing of concerns. An overwhelming number of comments contained positive

remarks in support of a performance-based assessment system. Comments included remarks such as:

> "....I say personally to go ahead at full speed because this program is great, provided the people of Louisiana give it chance to succeed...."
>
> "....I feel it [LTIP, LTEP and the STAR] will do wonders for the quality of education received by the children of our state."
>
> "....It is my opinion that the LTIP/LTEP Assessment Programs are one of the best things that could have happened to education in Louisiana."
>
> "....Let's stop bickering and get the show on the road."
>
> "STAR is an excellent means of assessment."
>
> "....This is long overdue...."
>
> "To achieve in education what is good for our children, we should willingly implement the STAR as soon as possible to insure that superior teaching is a part of each student's school experience...."

Overall, participants responding in the questionnaire appeared to be excited about the program and its potential effects on improving teaching and learning in Louisiana classrooms. Many individuals from all education positions stated that they have already experienced positive changes and improvement since completing the pilot certification program. Teachers expressed how they are now able to do a better job in the classroom, principals and supervisors commented on how they have been able to improve their observation skills and do a better job of evaluating teaching performance. Some of the remarks by respondents included:

> "I resisted thie assessment program initially. After seeing the resaerch backing the instrument, I found this evaluative system to be my 'professional salvation'. Now I talk with my teachers on a much higher level when discussing their teaching performance. The teachers 'love' this detailed description of their instruction and children's learning. The appreciate the recognition of the very specific nuances of the Art of Education....."
>
> "....The LTIP/LTEP and STAR Training Program was very valuable to me personally.....The question, 'How can you tell if a teacher is teaching?' was definitely answered."
>
> "....I look forward to using the STAR....Great! Let's get started!"
>
> "....it [STAR] has made me a better educator. Thanks for the opportunity to bring many things back to a useful level."

With regard to the STAR, respondents appeared most positive about the extensive and comprehensive nature of the instrument, the strong research base, and the specificity and objectivity

of the indicators. For example, one respondent wrote, ".....the indicators in the STAR are all valid and necessary....". Another individual wrote, "...."; another commented, ".... The [STAR] instrument is fair and thorough....."; and other comments noted the decision making process, such as, "....Scoring is a plus for this instrument. It is simple and objective, a much fairer process than allowing extra points or using a scale for scoring....".

While comments were filled with positive and supportive statements, they were not without concerns and reservations. Overall, the greatest number of respondents appeared to be concerned with (a) time, (b) money (costs and funding), (c) selection of the "master teacher", (d) consistency, (e) maintenance of high quality and standards, (f) orientation and inservice activities for teachers, and (g) loss of the life certificate.

In many comments provided by respondents, the issue of time -- more time needed for program sessions, not enough time to implement, not enough time to do observations and assessments, questions about release time for conferences, time for teachers out of the classroom -- was in some way mentioned or implied. Along with positive comments about the programs and the STAR, these concerns were evident. Examples of remarks included in respondents' written comments included:

> "....being out of the classroom for seven days is stressful..."
>
> "....I am in agreement with an observation being done by the State, but feel that LTIP and LTEP are much too time consuming for both classsroom teachers and assessors."
>
> "....In the past we in Louisiana have 'scrapped' entire programs because of problems within the programs. The major problem always seems to be inadequate funding. We must make the commitment to education and fund it....."
>
> "....I think that the 'peer teacher' is going to be a problem. No good teacher is going to what to leave his/her students for large amounts of time. I have been told that these people will be released for a year just to do evaluations. I personally would not want to do that either....."

Secondly, respondents appeared somewhat concerned about the costs related to implementation such as, additional compensation for master teachers, and state funding to continue support of the program and increased teacher salaries. However, funding does not seem to be so much of a concern as other identified areas. Examples of respondents' remarks are:

"....How does that [LTIP/LTEP] justify the money, man-power, intense work and the

excessive amount of time consumed in implementing this program if you're only determining that the teacher can do the job. It's more important to put all these energies on local levels to see that the teachers are doing their jobs if in fact that's where the problem lies -- with the teachers."

"....my class time. If the program remains as is, I foresee complications. There is absolutely no way I can wholeheartedly devote myself to both a full teaching obligation and the evaluation program...."

Selection of the master teacher appears to be of great concern to many individuals. By their comments, the concern appears to mostly concerned with assurance that (1) "good" and effective teachers are selected as master teachers on assessment teams, and not just "someone with a master's degree"; and (2) master teachers are somehow protected from the politics and negative peer pressures which may result from assessing a fellow teacher in the same school building where employed. Several comments were offered that indicated other teachers' resentment toward the "master teacher" in the school building. Also, there seemed to be a theme in a number of comments regarding protection for the master teacher and other assessors against legal repercussions resulting from "unsatisfactory" ratings that ended in termination of a life certificate. Currently, the question of whether or not the State has the authority to lift a life certificate is being reviewed within the court system.

With regard to implementation of the programs (LTIP and LTEP), there appears to be strong concerns pertaining to maintaining consistent and high quality standards for both individuals trained and functioning as assessors, as well as expectations set for teachers (specifically interpretations of STAR assessment indicators). A number of respondents appear concerned that these programs will not be implemented as intended by the research and development efforts, but will be "watered down" and "rushed in" while sacrificing the integrity and losing the opportunity to truly improve Louisiana classrooms for teachers and students. Further, it appears that respondents are concerned that if these programs are implemented without sufficient time and funding to support the prescribed components and activities, they will become nothing more than exercises in bureaucracy and paperwork. Comments received include such as:

"....I believe this entire program can work if rules are followed and local politics can be kept out of it....."

"....The main policy issue concern is.....[that] many of our teachers have not as yet been properly inserviced in the full expectations to prevent anxiety and confusion. Many teachers are very apprehesive especially since we are now receiving negative feedback from the teacher unions in the state....."

"....to begin an evaluation system in only a few months which threatens the livelihood of thousands of dedicated teachers without first giving them the opportunity to become intensely familiar and accepting of the instrument will only lower the morale of an already 'shell-shocked' group of professionals....."

"....I am concerned that there are so many decisions yet to be made...."

"....My reservations lie in the area of this fall's implementation. I'm not sure teachers will have been in-serviced thoroughly enough. Those in my district have not!!"

Numerous respondents supported and strongly endorsed the STAR and the LTIP and LTEP, but questioned why LTEP was linked to professional renewable certification, especially for those who currently hold a lifetime certificate. Several illustrative comments are:

"I, along with a lot of other teachers in this state, are upset with the fact that we are losing our lifetime teaching certificates!...."

"....I am deeply concerned about the attitude of those experienced teachers with lifetime certificates...."

"....This program has some merit, but after the kinks are worked out! This program should be implemented with new teachers entering Louisiana schools for the first time; all others should be 'grandpersoned'."

Finally, there were many comments indicating fear and apprehension regarding statewide implementation. It seems that while many informed educators support these programs and compliment the quality and integrity with which they have been developed, there is substantial concern that this will be lost, either because of poor monitoring or non-standard implementation, or outright "sabotage" of these programs. Several examples are as follows:

"No matter what amount of effort to ensure the contrary, many items on the STAR are subjectively rated...."

"One of my greatest concerns is that the scores will be inflated. I base this on comments I have heard from a number of people at conferences or meetings. Master teachers and principals say they will 'take care' of their people. If that happens, it will have no more meaning than our current observation/evaluation plans."

"....It's a good progra, but it needs to be heavily inserviced before implementation. I am concerned that all principals will not do what they are supposed to and so some teachers will be more harshly evaluated than others...."

"....Many teachers are resently of having to 'jump through another hoop' in order to prove their worth. They feel that while this program is good in theory, in reality it adds another layer of work and beauracracy to an already overburdened profession. Many feel that this program will result in few, if any, real changes...."

"....That bad news is, many 'educators' are trying to sabotage the program. Sink or float, I'm using the STAR for life!...."

"....As a teacher, I am concerned with the expertise of the assessor. I definitely want someone who did well in the training sessions, not someone who barely passed or cheated his way through....."

Positive comments and endorsements of these programs and the STAR outweigh the concerns and negative contribution;, however, the above comments were provided as illustrations of common themes and concerns which seemed to most pervasive. Care was taken to select examples from all types of respondent types so that an adequate representation of perspectives could be included in these responses to open-ended items.

Discussion

The Louisiana Teaching Internship Law (1984) and The Children First Act (1988) provide for the development of on-the-job teaching performance assessment programs for all beginning teachers (1 to 2 years experience) and all experienced teachers (3 or more years experience) employed in Louisiana. A major focus of these programs is on the observation and assessment of teaching and learning in the classroom learning environment. Currently, these programs are being developed with funding support provided to the Louisiana Department of Education by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education through 8(g) monies. Conducted by the College of Education at Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, initial research, development and piloting efforts began during the 1988-89 school year and are continuing as statewide implementation has been initiated (1990-1991) with approximately 20% all experienced teachers and approximately 1500 first-year teachers.

The focus of this investigative effort is to gain a greater understanding of the perceptions and level of acceptance of informed educators for a new and innovative program related to teacher assessment for renewable teaching certification through a followup statewide survey. Further, an effort was made to obtain information regarding the effectiveness of the pilot STAR assesor certification program.

Overall, it appears that educators, regardless of current professional position, endorse the

notion of assessing on-the-job teaching performance for both the purpose of providing support and staff development to the beginning teacher and experienced teacher, as well as a means of granting and renewing statewide teaching certification. However, when compared to results of the initial survey (Chauvin & Ellett, 1989), support does not seem to be quite as strong, particularly for the LTEP. It seems that there is greater concern and resistance to the notion of renewable certification for experienced teachers, especially those who currently hold a lifetime certificate.

Other responses obtained in this survey related to assessment team composition, procedures governing observation and conference processes seem to be similar in direction and intensity noted in the initial survey and appear to support the "multiple assessors with multiple observations" structure for assessment purposes, as well as other assessment requirements (e.g., inclusion of the Comprehensive Unit Plan [CUP]). Louisiana educators surveyed appear to agree that the number of observations should be determined by the assessment team based upon the observed performance of the assessed teacher. Respondents also supported the team approach to conferences and professional development activities.

Specifically related to the LTEP, respondents appear sensitive to the social and political pressures which may result from peer assessment, but strongly endorse inclusion of the peer teacher on the assessment team. Based upon the survey data obtained, there appears to be strong support for selecting the "peer teacher", from a different school than the assessed teacher's assigned school. For the LTIP, the consensus appeared to be in favor of selection of the master teacher from within the school of the the assessed teacher: indicative of the support and staff development focus of the LTIP versus the certification status of the LTEP. However, currently the DOE has elected to hire "full time" master/peer teachers to maintain a full assessment caseload with no teaching responsibilities as a "stopgap" measure during initial implementation.

Interestingly, respondents support the notion that <u>every</u> member of the assessment team should have access to the assessed teacher's summary profile, regardless whether or not he/she agrees. It is unclear as to the intent of this position. Perhaps it is an expression of the team's desire to have access to all available data in order that the greatest amount of support and

assistance can be offered in professional development efforts. However, it, in part, may detract from the opportunity for the assessed teacher to express ownership to the professional growth process and to take an active role in involving his/her assessment team in the such activities. Finally, it may be indicative of respondents' need to further understand the nature of the LTEP program, its focus on certification or licensure and the necessity of maintaining confidentiality of the teacher's personal assessment outcomes. That is, the assessment data belongs to the teacher and the Department of Education. In this survey, results seem to indicate that teachers desire to maintain control over who receives their assessment profile; however, other educators seem to indicate a perceived "right" to have access, particularly principals/and assistant principals. Gaining a stronger grasp of the LTEP program and how it differs from LTIP may indeed alter somewhat the perceptions held by educators in this regard. Given this is a new approach toward teaching certification in Louisiana, this may very well be the case and should be considered in interpreting responses.

It seems, for the most part, that the STAR is perceived as a fair and impartial process that is clear and easy to understand. However, this is not as strongly evidenced in the results as they were in the initial study (Chauvin & Ellett, 1989). Across respondent types it seems that most view the process as reasonable in time requirements and directly beneficial to the development of professional improvement plans. Again, the link between assessment and professional development, reflective practice and impact on students' learning does not seem to be as strong as that evidenced in the initial study. This may be due to several factors.

First, participants in the initial pilot year were selected as the "best" from each school district and may therefore have been more motivated and/or committed to the process and understanding important conceptual links. All sessions were conducted by program developers who had been involved since initiation of research and development activities regarding these programs and the STAR. As a result, such conceptual links may have received stronger emphasis during pilot sessions than in the ~120 sessions conducted in 1989-1990. During the 1989-1990, all principals were required to participate, one master teacher was selected from each school using a

wide range of selection procedures and criteria varying from school to school and district to district.

Second, as implementation target dates approached, there may have been more attention on "getting certified", taking care of logistics (time and money), concern over possible consequences "loss of the life certificate", and "getting ready" to manage the programs, rather than on understanding and maintaining focus on far-reaching goals (e.g., professional improvement, enhanced student learning, reflective practice, collegiality and collaboration, etc.).

Third, as evidenced in the qualitative analysis of comments offered by respondents, there seems to be more evidence than in the previous pilot year supporting educators' fear and apprehension due to their perception of "being in the dark" at the district and school levels, potential for losing a life certificate, and confusion regarding issues such as implementation logistics and monitoring, professional support and assistance, and maintenance of quality and integrity as these programs move from "research and development" to "policy-governed, statewide implementation". Finally, individuals seemed to be highly frustrated and personally concerned in terms of their own abilities to "manage it all", given perceptions of limited time, money and resources.

For the most part, It appears that educators, support efforts to develop, adapt or revise current local personnel evaluation procedures consistent with STAR assessment indicators and process. Principals seem to be the least supportive. This may be a result of their present level of comfort with current local evaluation practices (e.g., takes less time, easier to complete, most result in "satisfactory" or "excellent" ratings, etc.). An important distinction needs to be made: local personnel evaluation processes should not be combined with the LTEP nor should one be subsumed in the other. Each program addresses different purposes and to combine the two would be conflicting. The LTEP is a state certification program verifying the individual's "ability to perform" at pre-established level(s) of proficiency, whereas each local personnel evaluation program is related to the local employing position of the district and is concerned with the district's responsibility to maintain locally established day-to-day employer-employee expectations resulting

in decisions pertaining to continued employment or dismissal. Comments received in this investigative effort as well as personal observations during the past two years of research and development indicate that educators, school board members, policy makers do not seem to generally understand such distinctions.

Regarding the assessor certification program, responses seem to suggest program revisions such as an extended program to allow more time to learn necessary information and to include additional opportunities for field observations in "live" classrooms. Respondents overwhelming endorsed multiple proficiency checkpoints with minimum standard levels of performance. However, inclusion of the knowledge test does not seem to be as well supported. One explanation may be that for many individuals, this became a difficult and "anxiety-producing" task (Personal Observations, 1989-1990). Prior to pilot implementation of the STAR assessor certification program, very few professional development programs conducted statewide had required any specific measures of proficiency or knowledge acquisition. Certification requirements, for the most, had been based on satisfactory coursework completion and experience levels. Thus, this type of innovation was, in effect, creating substantial changes in "the way we do things".

Respondents indicated support for extending the STAR assessor certification program to more than seven days. Respondents in the initial survey (Chauvin & Ellett, 1989) indicated that eight (8) days was insufficient to satisfactorily complete all program activities (which are now increased in the current program piloted during 1989-1990) and comfortably attain acceptable levels of proficiency. Responses obtained in this survey, as well as the initial investigation, seem to support efforts to increase time, not delete activities or standards. Mandatory annual review/update sessions for maintaining certification as a STAR assessor were also strongly endorsed by respondents in both efforts and provide evidence of educators' desire to maintain quality and credibility of the programs and participating assessors.

Recommendations to the DOE and BESE for revisions in the extended pilot year program reflected suggestions and input of Louisiana educators; however, after much debate with program developers, the DOE and BESE reached a compromise with developers for a seven-day program.

Initially, the DOE had requested a shortened program of 5-6 days. Given the overwhelming results of these two surveys of informed educators and their perceptions that the program was too intense because there was not enough time, it seems that careful consideration should be given to the rationale for enacting such policy decisions, in spite of available data and recommendations.

Overall, few significant differences were noted in the responses of surveyed educators regarding the LTIP, LTEP and STAR. A review of qualitative data further substantiate response patterns evident in the quantitative analysis that support these programs and the process as desirable by informed educators in Louisiana. Policy issues related to the selection of assessment team members, protection from social and political pressures, confidentiality of data, time and money issues are evident in the written responses to open-ended items. Also, there seems to be strong support for the STAR and related assessment process; however, strong evidence indicates that experienced teachers holding the life certificate should now be required to undergo LTEP for the purpose of continuing or retaining certification. This differs from perceptions held for the LTIP or LTEP for teachers with 2-3 years experience (i.e, those holding a provisional certificate), as the same concern regarding certification does not appear.

In general, comments offered by educators who participated in the survey strongly support implementation of the LTIP and LTEP and the use of the STAR. However, correspondingly, they voiced concerns regarding maintenance of standards and quality in the preparation programs for assessors and the assessment process for teachers, as the programs are delivered and implemented by the Department of Education. Concerns appear mainly related to the potential for shortened and rushed timelines and less-than-adequate funding provided at the local level to facilitate implementation. Also, there seems to be much concern that these programs will not be implemented as intended and with high, consistent quality and integrity. As offered by these educators, there appears to be a "mind-set" that good things have gone awry in the past because of lack of concientious backing by all levels involved -- state and local educators and policy-makers.

Currently, implementation procedures seem contradictory in a number of instances, indicating that perhaps closer attention should be afforded input offered by informed educators.

For example, policy has not been established regarding monitoring of assessors, and required annual updates for the purpose of recertification. The assessor certification program was reduced to seven days, with strong efforts by some district superintendents and DOE personnel to reduce it further. Informed educators provided input for lengthening, not shortening, the program. This may be one explanation why respondents in this survey indicated that program activities enhanced professional abilities, but the session was not as strongly viewed as "meaningful and worthwhile". That is, a program may be so intense that full benefit cannot be realized and individuals leave feeling "herded" and "short-changed".

Participants in the survey appear to be committed to the implementation and anticipated outcomes of the LTIP and LTEP. However, the overriding concerns related to all the reasons why it may not work have not completely disappeared. It seems, at the present time and supported by personal observations and a random review of newspaper accounts, that individuals responsible for program implementation (e.g, DOE personnel), policy-makers (e.g., legislators) and those involved at the "grassroots" level of implementation (e.g., regional and local district personnel and assessors) are attending more to concerns highlighted by uninformed individuals (e.g., teacher organizations/teacher unions, school boards), rather than input provided by those who are most informed (e.g., program developers, survey results of educators' perceptions, etc.). As a result, some current changes and policy decisions (e.g., disseminating assessment profiles to all assessment team member) have been seemingly made in response to the public and political pressure and resistance to large-scale change. It seems that to pursue a reactionary path, rather than one that is guided by proactive decision making processes that maintain original and long-term goals intended by current legislation(e.g., professional growth and enhancement of students' learning in Louisiana's classrooms), will likely result in misguided actions and programmatic doom.

As research and development activities have continued into initial implementation (1990-1991), continued are needed in addressing policy and procedural issues. Careful consideration should be given to the everpresent concerns regarding consistent and high quality statewide implementation, professional equity, anonymity of assessors, maintenance of program standards and

objective, yet individualized, application of assessment processes.

At present, given the results of two surveys of educators' perceptions, as well as input currently available through informal contact and observation during initial implementation, there appears to be a strong need for the Department of Education to continue to investigate the logistical problems related to such things as information access/public communications, release time and money, and plan accordingly. Most importantly, in order for teachers and other educators to fully understand these programs, extensive orientation activities should be planned to inform all educators of these programs and reduce the inaccurate information, and negative fears that are apparently being shared by uninformed professionals at this time.

Based upon the respondents' comments, it appears that informed Louisiana educators are open and ready for a change, one that can at least be initiated through the efforts of LTIP and LTEP. It seems critical to continue investigations of perceptions held by Louisiana educators regarding the LTIP, LTEP and STAR. Of greater importance, it seems that efforts should be focused on measuring current perceptions held by Louisiana educators who are <u>not fully informed</u> regarding these programs and the STAR. Results of such efforts could then be carefully analyzed and compared with those measured for informed educators. Information obtained might be used to influence statewide education and communication to enhance the success of these programs. Also, assessment of the impact of information and education efforts could be conducted and analyzed through followup survey investigations for use in further development of assessment processes and staff development programs. Through the use of the STAR, informed educators appear to agree that these programs and the STAR are an opportunity to re-focus classrooms not only on effective teaching, but more importantly on students' learning -- in a concerted, statewide effort. However, sufficient opportunities may not be available to effect long lasting change unless consideration of educators' input is used to enhance understandings of <u>all</u> Louisiana educators and citizens. This investigative effort has only provided an initial sensing of the response of Louisiana educators to LTIP, LTEP and the STAR. In conclusion, the task, though seen as a difficult and awesome one, is one which appears to have been grasped by informed educators throughout Louisiana as worthy

and attainable. The key to successful statewide efforts that in turn shall "put the light on the learner" seems to be, in part, based in understanding educators' perceptions of the the LTIP, LTEP and the STAR.

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Appendix

Table 1
Louisiana Teaching Internship and
Statewide Teacher Evaluation Program Survey
Demographic Information for Total Respondent Group
April, 1990

1. Sex: 60.7 Female 39.3 Male

2. Ethnicity:

23.7	Black	0.1	Hispanic
75.9	White	0.2	Other

3. Age:

00.0	21-25	27.1	41-45
00.9	26-30	21.2	46-50
06.9	31-35	14.1	51-55
19.8	36-40	10.1	55-60+

4. Current Position:

45.5	Teacher	05.4	Central Office Supervisor
33.3	Principal	02.3	College Faculty
11.6	Assistant Principal	01.9	Other

5. Parish in which you are presently employed: _____
(please print)

6. School level in which you work?

03.1	Early Childhood	47.8	Elementary	18.2	Secondary/Middle
21.4	Secondary/High	07.3	Multiple Levels	02.1	College Faculty

7. Content area in which you primarily teach or consider your specialty?

37.8	Basic Skills/Elementary	00.9	Art/Music
04.9	Special Education	11.5	English/Language Arts
04.2	Vocational Education	04.1	P.E./Recreation
11.0	Social Studies	09.0	Math
03.0	Biological Sciences	12.6	Other
00.9	Physical Sciences		

8. Total number of years experience in public/private schools (including the 1989-90 school year):

00.1	1 year	15.3	11-15 years
00.0	2 years	27.7	16-20 years
00.3	3- 5 years	52.8	20 + years
03.8	6-10 years		

9. Highest degree earned:

00.2 Bachelors
26.8 Masters
60.9 Masters +30
08.0 Specialist
04.0 Doctorate

10. To what extent do you feel prepared to explain elements/requirements of the Louisiana Teaching Internship (LTIP) as a support and staff development process for beginning teachers (less than two years teaching experience)?

01.0 Not Prepared At All
17.2 Somewhat Prepared
62.2 Prepared
19.6 Completely Prepared

11. To what extent do you feel prepared to explain elements/requirements of the Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program (LTEP) as a process for granting "renewable professional" certification for experienced teachers (three or more years teaching experience)?

00.7 Not Prepared At All
18.9 Somewhat Prepared
62.5 Prepared
18.0 Completely Prepared

12. How many STAR (System for Teaching and learning, Assessment and Review) assessments have you completed with beginning teachers? _____

13. How many STAR assessments have you completed with experienced teachers? _____

14. To what extent do you feel prepared to complete STAR assessments of teachers in the initial implementation of the LTIP and LTEP beginning Fall, 1990.

00.8 Not Prepared At All
28.9 Somewhat Prepared
55.9 Prepared
14.5 Completely Prepared

15. If your response to item #14 was "Not Prepared At All", how many additional days of preparation through the STAR assessor certification program do you feel would be necessary to be "Completely Prepared" to complete STAR assessments.

34.5 1-2 Days
37.9 3-4 Days
10.3 5-6 Days
___ 7-8 Days
03.4 9-10 Days
13.8 More than 10 Days

16. If your response to item #14 was "Somewhat Prepared", how many additional days of preparation through the STAR assessor certification program do you feel would be necessary to be "Completely Prepared" to complete STAR assessments.

42.2 1-2 Days
32.1 3-4 Days
14.5 5-6 Days
04.0 7-8 Days
02.8 9-10 Days
04.4 More than 10 Days

Table 2
Louisiana Teaching Internship and
Statewide Teacher Evaluation Program Survey
Number of Items per Subcategory
April, 1990

Subcategory	Number of Items
Demographic Information	16[1]
Louisiana Teaching Internship Program (LTIP)	34
General Endorsement (1)[2]	
Assessment Team Components (9)	
Policy Considerations for Implementation (12)	
Procedures for Implementing the Assessment Process (12)	
Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program (LTEP)	46
General Endorsement (1)	
Assessment Team Components (12)	
Policy Considerations for Implementation (15)	
Procedures for Implementing the Assessment Process (13)	
Procedures pertaining to "Unsatisfactory" Performance (5)	
STAR	27
Assessor Certification Program (14)	
Professional Development Process (4)	
Related Assessment Concerns (3)	
STAR Instrument/Manual (6)	

[1]Total number of items for subcategory

[2]Number of items related to this issue

Table 3
Louisiana Teaching Internship and
Statewide Teacher Evaluation Program Survey
Percent of Item Responses by Scale Category for Total Respondents
April, 1990

The following items pertain to the Louisiana Teaching Internship Program (LTIP):

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
1.	The LTIP should be implemented for all beginning teachers in Louisiana.	3.7	6.7	48.5	41.0
	Assessment Team Components				
2.	The "master teacher should be certified in the same subject area and/or grade level as the beginning teacher to whom he/she is assigned.	4.0	24.1	35.3	36.5
3.	The "master teacher" should be selected only by the principal of the school in which the beginning teacher is teaching.	10.1	48.7	27.9	13.3
4.	The "master teacher" should be selected from a group of potential candidates recommended by the school faculty and agreed upon by the principal of the beginning teacher's school and the outside assessor.	9.6	33.3	39.4	17.6
5.	The master teacher assigned to the assessment team should be agreed upon by the ..ipal of the beginning teacher's school and the (..ide assessor.	8.4	30.6	45.6	15.4

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
6.	If the master teacher can show valid reason(s), he/she should have the right to refuse assignment to an assessment team.	1.7	3.3	54.0	40.9
7.	If the teacher can show valid reason(s), he/she should have the right to request that an alternate master teacher be assigned to his/her assessment team.	2.2	6.9	57.1	33.7
8.	Participation by the master teacher on an assessment team is a professional obligation and therefore, does not require additional compensation.	44.1	35.3	14.9	5.7
9.	The third member of the assessment team has been defined as a "college faculty member". "College faculty member" should be expanded to include other individuals such as retired educators, central office staff, department of education personnel, and other "outside assessors" who have been certified in the STAR assessment process.	12.8	13.7	49.8	23.6
10.	When there is a need, the local school district should be allowed to assign an administrator other than the school principal to the support team for a beginning teacher.	6.4	13.1	59.6	21.0
	Policy Considerations for Implementation				
11.	All beginning teachers should be provisionally certified until they complete requirements of the LTIP.	2.7	6.7	65.4	25.2
12.	Any teacher, (regardless of experience in other state(s)), teaching in Louisiana for the first time should be required to enter the LTIP.	11.0	31.8	38.6	18.5
13.	All out-of-state teachers with less than two (2) years of teaching experience should be required to enter the LTIP.	3.7	7.5	58.3	30.6
14.	The recommendation made by the support team at the end of the internship year should be based on the teacher's performance compared to a predetermined and objective State standard.	1.3	6.1	67.6	24.9

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
15.	The development of a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) will help the beginning teacher prepare for subsequent observations to be assessed with the STAR.	2.7	7.4	63.1	26.6
16.	Beginning teachers should complete a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) on their own time (outside of regular school hours), rather than school time.	11.7	32.6	40.6	15.1
17.	The beginning teacher should be required to complete a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) for both the fall and spring assessment process.	17.7	45.0	25.3	12.1
18.	If the beginning teacher demonstrates acceptable performance in developing a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) during the fall semester, he/she should not be required to complete a second CUP in the spring semester.	6.3	20.9	36.8	36.0
19.	The beginning teacher should be allowed to choose the subject area and/or class group in which the STAR assessment will take place.	2.0	8.3	39.5	50.3
20.	The beginning teacher and the support team should negotiate and agree upon a subject area in which the STAR assessment will be conducted so that the subject observed corresponds with both the overall content area expertise of the assessment team and the beginning teacher's preference.	14.7	42.1	32.5	10.6
21.	Some teachers teach multiple subjects (e.g. elementary teachers and some secondary teachers). For these teachers, the assessment process should be conducted in a major subject area (e.g. reading, algebra, English), rather than a special area such as art or music.	5.8	18.2	42.9	33.0
22.	For teachers who teach multiple subjects (e.g. elementary teachers and some secondary teachers), the fall assessment process should be conducted in a major subject area or subject of primary emphasis/responsibility and the spring assessment process should be conducted in a different subject area.	13.8	43.4	33.4	9.3

Procedures for Implementing the Assessment Process

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
23.	All beginning teachers should be observed at least three times by each member of the support team during the first ninety days of employment. (This equals a minimum of nine (9) "announced" observations during the ninety day period.)	36.2	37.1	19.5	7.3
24.	Observations for LTIP should begin only after the first twenty (20) school days of each school year.	2.2	5.1	45.3	47.4
25.	All LTIP observations should be conducted for the full period of the lesson.	1.2	2.8	43.5	52.4
26.	Beyond an initial STAR assessment the number of observations necessary for a beginning teacher should be based upon his/her assessment results and agreed upon by the support team.	3.4	12.3	62.4	21.8
27.	After each observation, members of the support team should be required to individually meet with the beginning teacher to discuss their findings.	17.1	50.1	24.7	8.1
28.	Instead of individual meetings after each observation, members of the support team should only be required to meet jointly with the beginning teacher after each has had an opportunity to observe the teacher's performance.	5.1	21.7	51.0	22.2
29.	Conducting the post-assessment conferences is a professional obligation.	2.3	6.2	60.0	31.5
30.	All support team members should attend the joint conferences held at the end of each semester during the internship year.	1.5	16.8	49.2	32.6
31.	All support team members should have input into the conferences with the beginning teacher, but should not be required to attend each conference.	18.6	46.5	29.5	5.4
32.	Conferences should be held during school hours with release time provided to the beginning teacher and support team members.	3.2	9.9	44.7	42.1
33.	If conferences are held before/after normal school hours, no extra compensation should be provided.	41.0	33.4	19.8	5.7

	Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
34. Assessment data collected by the master teacher is an important element in planning for a teacher's professional growth.	1.8	2.3	58.8	37.1

The following items pertain to the Louisiana Teaching Evaluation Program (LTEP):

Assessment Team Composition

35. The LTEP should be implemented as a statewide assessment program for granting renewable professional certification for experienced teachers.	16.8	15.9	49.6	17.6
36. The "peer teacher" should be included as a member of the assessment team.	6.9	13.5	48.0	31.6
37. Inclusion of the peer teacher on the assessment team contributes to the professionalization of teaching.	4.1	14.7	54.0	27.1
38. "Peer teacher" should be defined as a teacher with a Master's degree in a field of education and at least five (5) years of successful teaching experience.	1.9	5.0	55.3	37.8
39. Where possible, the peer teacher should be certified in the same subject area and/or grade level as the teacher being assessed.	1.7	12.7	47.0	38.5
40. The peer teacher should be selected from a group of potential candidates recommended by the school faculty.	9.3	30.0	46.9	13.7
41. The peer teacher assigned to an assessment team should be agreed upon by the principal and outside assessor.	5.5	23.3	56.5	14.7
42. If a peer teacher is included on the assessment team, he/she should be one who teaches in a different school than that of the teacher being assessed.	6.2	18.6	32.2	42.9

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
43.	As long as a teacher has the right to request an alternate peer teacher to be assigned to his/her assessment team, it does not matter whether the peer teacher is from within or outside the school building.	16.3	38.2	36.6	8.8
44.	If the peer teacher can show valid reason(s), he/she should have the right to refuse assignment to an assessment team.	1.0	3.7	64.0	31.2
45.	If the teacher can show valid reason(s), he/she should have the right to request that an alternate peer teacher be assigned to his/her assessment team.	1.8	5.4	63.1	29.7
46.	Participation by the peer teacher on an assessment team is a professional obligation and therefore, does not require additional compensation.	42.9	36.1	16.3	4.7
47.	When there is a need, the local school district should be allowed to assign an administrator other than the school principal to the support team for a beginning teacher.	7.7	13.5	61.6	17.2
	Policy Considerations for Implementing the Assessment Process				
48.	A teacher who has successfully completed the Louisiana Teaching Internship Program should be required to undergo assessment in the Louisiana Teacher Evaluation Program during the next school year.	24.8	44.0	24.0	7.2
49.	Experienced, out-of-state teachers, teaching in Louisiana for the first time, should be required to immediately enter the assessment process.	4.1	18.1	56.2	21.5
50.	Experienced teachers should be assessed for state certification more frequently than every fifth year.	45.8	37.4	11.0	5.8
51.	"The Children First" act states that "each teacher shall be evaluated once every fifth year". During the year of assessment, each teacher should be assessed during the Fall and Spring semesters of the evaluation year.	19.4	32.4	39.4	8.8

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
52.	A state performance standard should be based on a procedure of combining data from both Fall and Spring assessments to make a decision regarding the teacher's overall performance.	7.0	28.9	52.2	11.9
53.	The development of a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) will help the experienced teacher prepare for subsequent observations to be assessed with the STAR.	8.0	16.9	62.7	12.4
54.	Experienced teachers should complete a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) on their own time (outside of regular school hours), rather than school time.	21.1	29.3	39.7	9.9
55.	The experienced teacher should be required to complete a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) for both the fall and spring assessment process.	42.3	42.3	11.5	4.0
56.	If the experienced teacher demonstrates acceptable performance in developing a Comprehensive Unit Plan (CUP) during the fall semester, he/she should not be required to complete a second CUP in the spring semester.	2.8	10.4	35.4	51.4
57.	The experienced teacher should be allowed to choose the subject area and/or class group in which the STAR assessment will take place.	2.5	7.5	39.6	50.5
58.	The experienced teacher and the support team should negotiate and agree upon a subject area in which the STAR assessment will be conducted so that the subject observed corresponds with both the overall content area expertise of the assessment team and the experienced teacher's preference.	15.4	38.7	35.8	10.1
59.	Some teachers teach multiple subjects (e.g. elementary teachers and some secondary teachers). For these teachers, the assessment process should be conducted in a major subject area (e.g. reading, algebra, English), rather than a special area such as art or music.	7.0	15.7	49.5	27.7

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
60.	For teachers who teach multiple subjects (e.g. elementary teachers and some secondary teachers), the fall assessment process should be conducted in a major subject area or subject of primary emphasis/responsibility and the spring assessment process should be conducted in a different subject area.	15.5	43.9	32.1	8.5
61.	By policy, each member of the assessment team should be provided with a copy of assessment profile results for the teacher(s) to whom each is assigned.	7.8	23.9	45.3	23.0
62.	By policy, each member of the assessment team should be provided with a copy of the assessment profile results for the teacher(s) to whom each is assigned only if the teacher gives prior permission.	15.2	40.3	31.7	12.7
	Procedures for Implementing the Assessment Process				
63.	Observations for LTEP should only begin after the first twenty (20) school days of each school year.	2.1	4.2	46.1	47.5
64.	All LTEP observations/assessments should be completed within a 5-7 day period during the fall assessment process and again during the spring assessment process.	9.3	14.6	53.5	22.5
65.	All LTEP observations should be conducted for the full period of the lesson.	1.0	3.5	51.4	43.9
66.	The conference to discuss evaluation results should be held within ten (10) days of the teacher's receipt of the assessment results.	0.6	1.9	60.8	36.7
67.	Conducting the post-assessment conference is a professional obligation.	2.0	5.9	61.4	30.6
68.	Conferences should be held to discuss the results of the assessment only if all assessors are present.	2.9	33.0	44.2	19.8
69.	The peer teacher should always attend the post-assessment conference.	3.8	32.2	44.6	19.4

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
70.	The teacher should have the option of requesting that he/she meet only with the principal to discuss assessment results.	8.0	29.3	47.2	15.4
71.	The outside assessor should always be present at the conference to discuss assessment results.	2.8	40.7	40.8	15.7
72.	Conferences should be held during school hours with release time provided.	1.8	11.3	51.8	35.1
73.	If conferences are held before/after normal school hours, then additional compensation should be provided.	3.8	17.5	40.2	38.5
74.	Assessment data collected by the peer teacher is an important element in planning for a teacher's professional growth.	1.7	5.0	68.2	25.0
75.	With the members of the assessment team, every teacher should develop a professional growth plan based on his/her assessment data.	4.1	14.0	64.0	17.9
	Procedures Pertaining to "unsatisfactory" Performance				
76.	"The Children First" act states that for each teacher receiving a rating of "unsatisfactory", a remediation program shall be developed. To what extent do you agree that this remediation plan should be approved by all members of the assessment team?	2.5	13.6	48.7	35.2
77.	When a remediation plan is developed, it should include both self-directed and principal-directed activities.	1.0	3.9	62.4	32.7
78.	Any teacher assessed as "unsatisfactory" in the fall assessment should immediately begin in a plan of remediation.	2.8	14.7	49.9	32.6
79.	If a teacher is assessed as "unsatisfactory" in the fall assessment, he/she should be considered as in the first year of remediation.	9.7	36.0	42.6	11.7

		Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
80.	"The Children First" act states that a teacher whose certificate has expired as a result of the LTEP process may not apply for certification for a period of two years. If a teacher reenters teaching after this two year period, he/she should immediately reenter the assessment process.	2.3	4.5	52.8	40.4
	Programs and Standards for Certification of STAR Assessors				
81.	I am proud to have successfully completed the "LTIP/LTEP Professional Development Program to certify STAR assessors".	0.9	2.6	40.9	55.5
82.	The information and skills obtained in the assessor certification program has enhanced my present performance as an instructional leader /master teacher to enhance student learning.	0.7	4.4	48.0	46.8
83.	Content aside, the assessment indicators reflect the kinds of skills that can be addressed with professional development activities at the school building level.	0.8	6.4	61.3	31.4
84.	More opportunities for field observations with a Program Leader or STAR Assistant should be included in the Assessor Certification Program.	1.7	16.8	52.2	29.2
85.	To be certified in the use of the STAR, assessors should meet established proficiency standards.	0.3	2.2	54.3	43.1
86.	In the certification program for STAR assessors there should be multiple proficiency checkpoints.	0.8	4.9	63.5	30.8
87.	To what extent do you agree that the following proficiency checkpoints should be included in the certification program for STAR assessors:				
	88. Knowledge test	0.9	4.2	53.4	41.5
	89. assessment of a video-taped lesson	3.6	13.7	54.1	28.6
	90. writing rationales for assessment decisions	1.6	7.0	54.0	37.4
	91. CUP assessment	2.3	5.4	57.8	34.5
	92. field observation	0.6	0.6	43.1	55.7

	Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
93. The development of staff development programs based on content in particular teaching as learning components (e.g. time or thinking skills) would help enhance teachers' performance and students' learning.	0.7	2.8	60.4	36.1
94. To better prepare teachers to meet the individual needs of students and enhance their learning, it is important for Louisiana teacher education programs to focus on the information and skills presented.	0.5	2.0	59.1	38.4
95. To what extent do you agree that you presently have the knowledge and capabilities to complete assessments with the STAR and conduct assessment conferences beginning the fall, 1990.	1.0	9.5	64.5	25.0
96. Before fall implementation, 1990, each person certified as a STAR assessor in the pilot program should be required to attend an update session (1 1/2 - 2 days) for the purpose of certification in the adopted final version of the LTIP and LTEP.	5.0	13.	36.8	44.4
97. The LTIP/LTEP Professional Development Program to Certify STAR Assessors should be extended to more than 7 days.	9.1	28.0	27.8	35.1
98. For me, the "LTIP/LTEP Professional Development Program to Certify STAR Assessors" was a meaningful and worthwhile professional growth activity.	1.7	4.9	44.8	48.5

Related Assessment Concerns

99. An assessment instrument and process similar to the STAR should be developed for the initial certification of school principals in Louisiana.	8.1	15.4	43.4	33.0
100. An assessment instrument and process similar to the STAR should be developed for renewable certification of school principals.	11.2	22.0	38.1	28.7
101. Local school districts should be required to develop, adopt and/or adapt their local personnel evaluation procedures consistent with the teacher evaluation program STAR assessment indicators and process.	6.0	12.6	44.4	37.0

	Strongly Disagree (A)	Disagree (B)	Agree (C)	Strongly Agree (D)
The following items pertain to the STAR instrument				
102. Completing assessments using the STAR takes a reasonable amount of time.	15.2	24.6	38.3	21.8
103. The STAR instrument is a fair and impartial process for assessing on-the-job teaching performance.	6.0	19.8	60.3	13.8
104. The indicators in the STAR instrument are clearly written/easily understood.	8.9	31.5	53.8	5.9
105. The STAR instrument can help me develop professional improvement plans for teachers who need them.	1.8	7.3	76.7	14.2